

FEBRUARY 13, 1978

KING TUTANKHAMUN COMES TO LOS ANGELES
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: THE EXHIBITION OF THE TREASURES OF TUTANKHAMUN OPENS (OPENED)
IN LOS ANGELES THIS WEEK (FEBRUARY 15) AFTER BREAKING
MUSEUM ATTENDANCE RECORDS IN WASHINGTON, D.C., CHICAGO AND
NEW ORLEANS. VOA WEST COAST CORRESPONDENT MATTHEW SCHNEIDER
REPORTS THAT TICKETS TO THE KING TUT EXHIBIT ARE THE HOTTEST
ITEMS IN TOWN.

VOICE: LOS ANGELES IS A CITY WHERE SUCCESS IS OFTEN MEASURED IN THE
LANGUAGE OF SHOWBUSINESS: WHEN SOMETHING IS ESPECIALLY
WELL DONE, IT'S "SOCKO" OR "A SMASH." ON THE OTHER HAND,
FAILURE IS "A BOMB" OR "A FLOP."

IN LOS ANGELES WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT THE EXHIBITION OF
ANTIQUITIES FROM THE LONG LOST TOMB OF THE TEENAGE PHAROAH
TUTANKHAMUN WHO DIED MORE THAN THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO, THE
PHRASE IS, "A SIZZLING BOX OFFICE SMASH."

MORE THAN ONE-MILLION-TWO-HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED
TO VIEW THE EXHIBIT DURING ITS FOUR MONTH STAY AT THE LOS
ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART. LAST MONTH WHEN TICKETS WENT
ON SALE, PEOPLE STOOD IN THE RAIN FOR AS LONG AS TWO HOURS
FOR A CHANCE TO BUY THEM. FOUR DAYS LATER THE LAST OF THE
TICKETS WAS GONE. THE DEMAND REMAINS SO HIGH THAT SOME OF
THE TWO DOLLAR TICKETS ARE BEING RE-SOLD FOR AS MUCH AS
TWENTY-EIGHT DOLLARS.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IS NOW BEING SWEEPED BY WHAT PEOPLE IN
WASHINGTON, CHICAGO AND NEW ORLEANS CAME TO CALL, "TUT FEVER."

VOICE: STORES ARE DOING A BRISK BUSINESS SELLING TUT T-SHIRTS, POSTER
(CONT'D) AND JEWELRY. STORIES ABOUT EGYPTIAN CULTURE, FASHIONS AND
FOOD APPEAR ALMOST DAILY IN AREA NEWSPAPERS -- AND ONE CHIC
BEVERLEY HILLS HAIR DRESSER NOW OFFERS A "TUT CUT."
LOCAL COLLEGES SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES REPORT HIGH
ENROLLMENT IN SPECIAL COURSES ABOUT ANCIENT EGYPT. A COUNTY
MUSEUM OFFICIAL TOLD VOA THAT MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP ROSE MORE
THAN THIRTY PER CENT AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE EXHIBITION.
MONTHS AGO THE MUSEUM INSTALLED A BANK OF SPECIAL TELEPHONES,
MANNED BY VOLUNTEERS, TO ANSWER THE HUNDREDS OF DAILY
PUBLIC INQUIRIES ABOUT THE EXHIBITION.

TUT EXHIBIT COORDINATOR ROBERT ESKONOS (ES-KO-NOS) SAYS
AMERICAN MUSEUMS HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED ANTHING LIKE IT:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- ESKONOS

"WE HERE AT THIS MUSEUM HAVE HAD EXHIBITIONS IN THE PAST
WHERE ON ANY GIVEN DAY WE HAVE HAD AS MANY PEOPLE AS WE
EXPECT TO HAVE DURING THIS UPCOMING EXHIBITION. BUT THOSE
EXHIBITIONS WOULD LAST SIX WEEKS WHERE THIS ONE WILL BE FOR
A FULL FOUR MONTHS, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK AND WE EXPECT TO HAVE
THAT HUGE CROWD DAY IN AND DAY OUT. SO IN TERMS OF NUMBERS
OF PEOPLE ON A CONTINUING BASIS, DAY AFTER DAY, WE HAVE
NEVER HAD ANTHING LIKE IT. NOR HAS ANY OTHER MUSEUM."

VOICE: IN THE LANGUAGE OF SHOW BUSINESS YOUNG KING TUT'S FABULOUS
TREASURE IS CREATING A SENSATION. IT'S A "WHAMO, SOCKO,
SMASH ENGAGEMENT."

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BML/RCS